



BATLEY TOWN CENTRE ANNUAL STATEMENT OF KEY ECONOMIC INDICATORS MARCH 2005

INTRODUCTION

Since 1996, Kirklees MC Planning Services has undertaken a programme of research into the health and vitality of shopping centres in the District. The annual collection of key performance data enables the role of individual town centres to be assessed, identifying the scope for change, renewal and diversification.

The first full audit for Batley town centre was published in February 1999 and has since been updated by an audit in January 2004. Changes that have taken place over the last 12 months are examined in his annual statement of key economic indicators. The indicators covered are:

- Shop unit and floorspace occupancy,
- Vacancy rates,
- Pedestrian footfall,
- Retail development pipeline,
- Retailer demand, and
- Prime retail rental levels.

FLOORSPACE, SHOP UNITS AND VACANCY

A survey of shop unit occupancy undertaken during November 2004 revealed that Batley town centre provides a total of 24,007 sq.m. (258,315 sq.ft.) net retail floorspace, and 200 shop units. 67.2% of floorspace in Batley town centre is given over to comparison (non-food) retailing. Figure 1 illustrates the make up of the town in both 2003 and 2004.

Figure 1: Batley shop unit / floorspace statistics

	2003		2004	
	Sales fl'space '000 sq.m	Shop units	Sales fl'space '000 sq.m	Shop units
Convenience (food)	6,145 (25.3%)	19 (9.4%)	6,094 (25.4%)	18 (9.0%)
Comparison ₁ (non-food)	16,226 (66.9%)	116 (57.4%)	16,123 (67.2%)	119 (59.5%)
Service	N/A	44 (21.8%)	N/A	50 (25.0%)
Vacant	1,893 (7.8%)	23 (11.4%)	1,790 (7.4%)	13 (6.5%)
TOTAL	24,265 (100%)	202 (100%)	24,007 (100%)	200 (100%)

Figure 2: Percentage changes 2003-04

	Floorspace	Shop units
Convenience	-0.8%	-5.3%
Comparison	-0.6%	+2.6%
Service	N/A	+13.6
Vacant	-5.4%	-43.5%

There has been an overall decrease in floorspace in the town due to a number of changes of use to service use occupancy. Figure 2 shows that there has been a large decrease in unit vacancy (-43.5%) within the town as a result of demolition of some vacant units on the bus station redevelopment site and a number of take-ups in the town's prime retail pitch. Vacant floorspace has not experienced the same level of decrease due to two new large vacancies within the town, one of which is at the Mill Discount Department Store.

There are 43 national multiple retailers represented within the study boundary, an increase of 2 since the 2004 audit. There are also 2 national charities present.

Figure 3: Batley Vacancy Trends

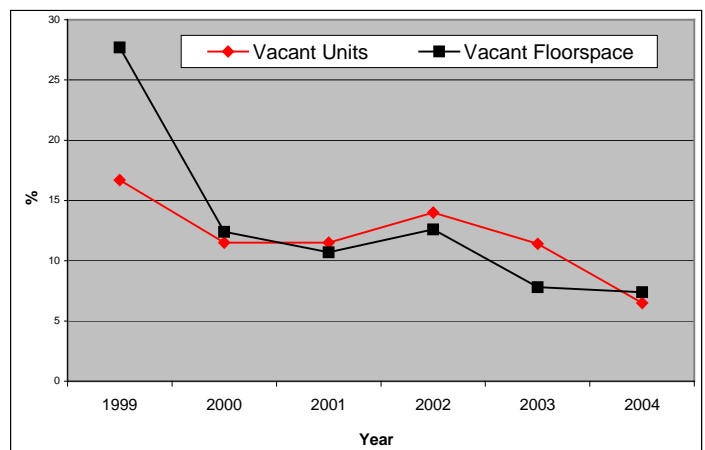
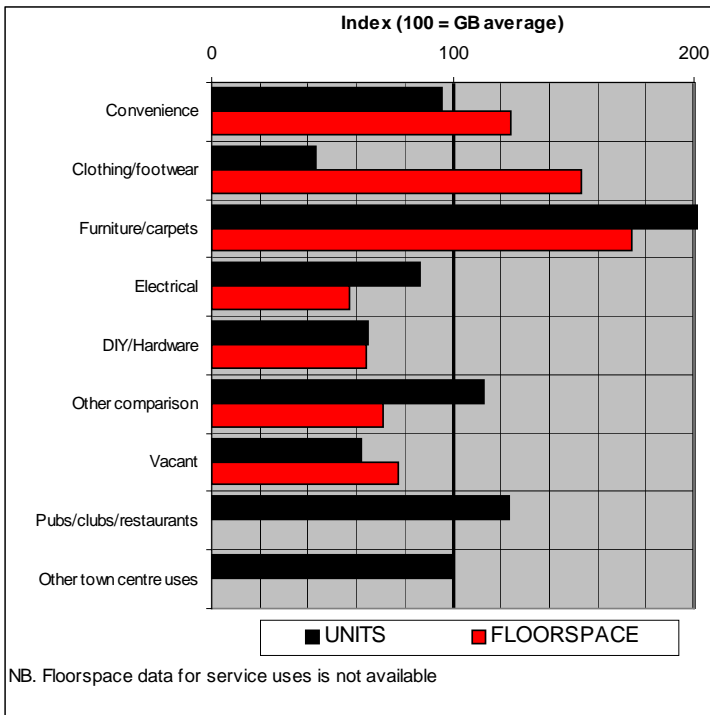


Figure 3 shows that retail vacancy in the town has declined over the past 5 years. The peak in 1999 was prior to the redevelopment of the Mill Discount Department Store. The decline in vacancy in the 2003 survey was mainly as a result of the demolition of vacant units on Alfreds Way.

Figure 4: Floorspace (sq.m.) and unit comparisons²

	Batley	Dewsbury	Heck'wike
Convenience	6,094 (25.4%)	10,011 (22.8%)	4,795 (42.2%)
Comparison ₁	16,123 (67.2%)	30,836 (70.3%)	4,968 (43.8%)
Vacant	1,790 (7.4%)	3,044 (6.9%)	1,584 (14.0%)
Total Retail Floorspace	24,007 (100%)	43,891 (100%)	11,347 (100%)
No. of vacant units	13 (6.5%)	52 (15.3%)	33 (20.2%)
Total no. of units	200 (100%)	340 (100%)	163 (100%)

Figure 5: Comparison with national averages³



Batley continues to exhibit an above average proportion of convenience goods floorspace, principally due to the Tesco 'Extra' store (opened in 2003). Floorspace occupied by furniture/carpet and clothing/footwear retailers remains well above the national average. Hardware and electrical goods retailers are poorly represented in the town as figure 5 indicates. The proportion of vacant units has dropped below the national average since the 2004 audit was published.

PEDESTRIAN FOOTFALL

Since 1994, pedestrian footfall counts have been undertaken on a yearly basis in Batley to measure the volume and pattern of visitor/shopper movement. The exercise takes place on a non-market day, market day and Saturday during October/November. Counts have been conducted for one hour in both the morning and afternoon (10.30am-11.30am and 2.30pm-3.30pm) with sample counts in between these. The map on Page 4 identifies the count locations.

As figure 6 shows, there has been a slight increase in footfall on a Saturday and slight decreases for both market day and non-market day, since the last audit.

Figure 6: Morning and afternoon hour counts at 5 locations (1995-2004)

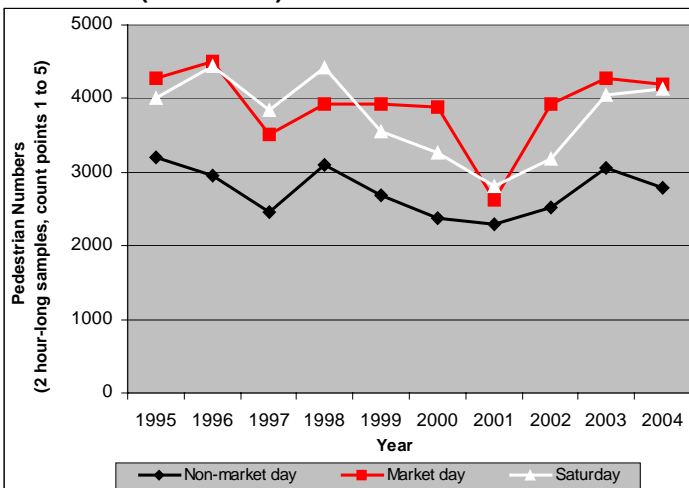


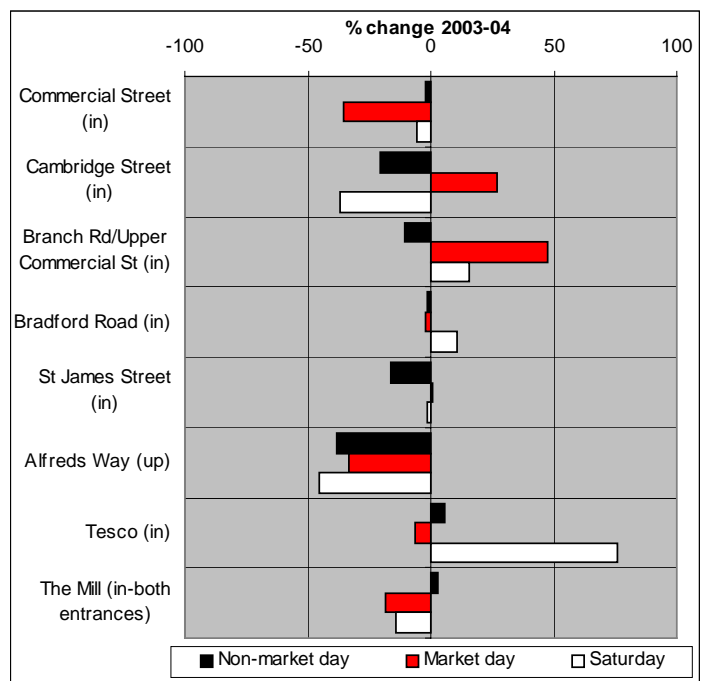
Figure 7: Morning and Afternoon Hour Samples 2004

Day	Non-Market		Market Day		Saturday	
Weather	Cold / sunny		Cold / dry		Cloudy / some rain	
Date	4/11/04		5/11/04		6/11/04	
	a.m.	p.m.	a.m.	p.m.	a.m.	p.m.
1. Commercial St	304	316	534	432	459	463
2. Cambridge St	110	96	164	110	88	39
3. Upper Comm St / Branch Rd	376	232	830	434	517	305
4. Bradford Rd	398	337	437	402	708	615
5. St James Street	300	314	404	448	488	460
Total Into Town	1488	1295	2369	1826	2260	1882
6. Alfred's Way:						
a) In	130	74	154	102	104	100
b) Out	80	58	170	104	162	116
7. Tesco 'Extra':						
a) In	526	511	517	519	1314	926
b) Out	559	661	557	651	1242	1035
8. Bridge Link:						
a) To Tesco	240	194	314	180	263	269
b) From Tesco	144	144	210	150	270	254
9. The Mill						
a) In	316	250	282	252	514	776
b) Out	224	440	180	326	322	812

All counts are flows into town unless otherwise stated. Counts at Bradford Rd, St James St and The Mill include both pedestrians and car occupants. The remaining counts relate to the movement of pedestrians around the town. Total into town includes count locations 1 to 5.

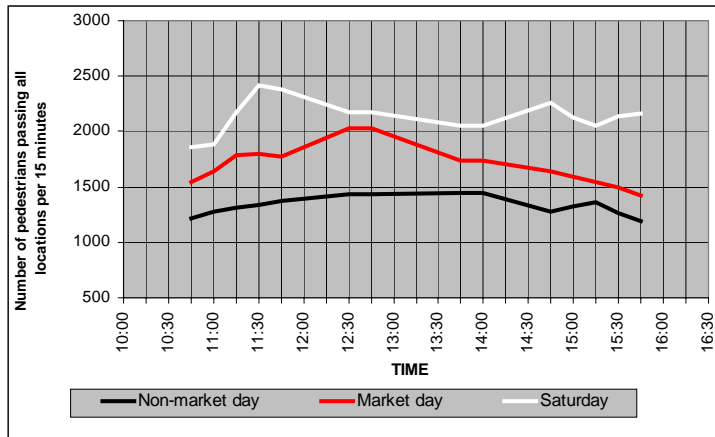
As figure 8 shows, there has been a large increase in those using Tesco on a Saturday (+76%) and increases in people accessing the town via Branch Road/Upper Commercial Street on a market day and Saturday. A number of count points exhibit a similar pattern of footfall to that recorded in the 2004 audit. There have been some declines, noticeably on market day in Commercial Street, Saturday on Cambridge Road and on all 3 survey days in Alfred's Way.

Figure 8: Street by street changes in pedestrian numbers (2003-2004)



Pedestrian numbers were also monitored this year over the new footbridge between Tesco and Commercial Street. This is an important link between the store and the town centre. The counts show that the bridge is well used and this may be responsible for the decline in the number of pedestrians using Alfred's Way to access the town.

Figure 9: Daily profile of pedestrian activity



Left: United Carpets



Right: Shops on Commercial Street

DEVELOPMENT PIPELINE

Over the last 12 months, retail development activity in the town centre has generally been small-scale conversion/refurbishment schemes. Other non retail development schemes of note are (i) the completion of the bridge link between Tesco and Commercial Street, and (ii) the refurbishment of the bus station. This began in Autumn 2004 and redevelopment is progressing to provide a new 6 bay bus station with a retail unit and a sheltered waiting area.



Left: New Tesco Bridge Link



Right: Bus Station Redevelopment

RETAILER DEMAND

A general assessment of demand for retail and leisure floorspace in Batley was undertaken during December 2004. Figure 10 shows the numbers of companies who have expressed interest in being represented in the town, and their maximum floorspace requirements.

Figure 10: Retail / leisure requirements 2004

Category	Number of registered interests	Maximum floorspace requirement sq.m. (sq.ft)
Convenience	1	232 (2,500)
Clothing/Footwear	1	232 (2,500)
Variety	1	1,394 (15,000)
Other Comparison	3	1,626 (17,500)
Restaurants/pubs	1	929 (10,000)
TOTAL	7	4,413 (47,500)

Source: FOCUS Information Ltd and KMC

Registered requirements have increased from 6 recorded in 2003, to 7 separate interests in 2004. All of these would be new to the town amounting to a maximum floorspace of 4,413 sq.m. (47,500 sq.ft.).

Further requirements may exist from other retailers who wish to relocate or establish themselves within the town centre but have not registered their interests. This assessment does not address the demand for office accommodation from financial, professional or other commercial uses.

PRIME RETAIL RENTAL LEVELS

Retailer movement in Commercial Street over the last 12 months has pushed Batley's prime zone A rents towards the £323 per sq.m. (£30 per sq.ft.) mark. Having previously recorded a prime rent of £269 per sq.m, this means that the town is experiencing a growth in prime rents of some 20%, which well exceeds the Yorkshire and Humber regional average growth of just 4.4%. This change demonstrates that the town is experiencing the positive economic effects of the new Tesco 'Extra' store on Bradford Road. The store has increased investor confidence in the town resulting in greater interest from developers/retailers particularly for premises in proximity and with good access to the Tesco development. This further emphasises the importance of maintaining the bridge link between the main shopping street in the town centre and the high-footfall generator of Tesco.

Notes:

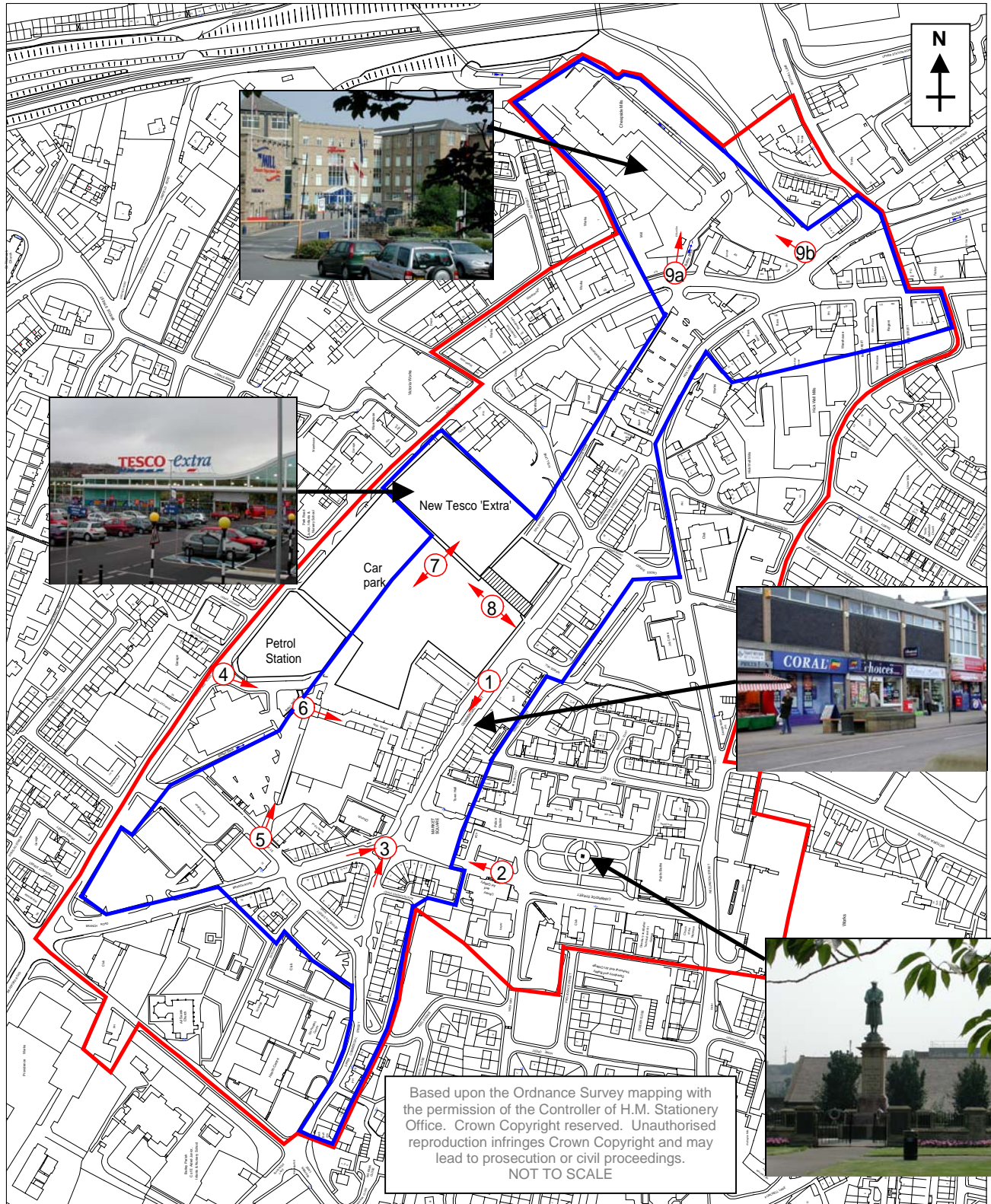
¹ Comparison goods figures include A1 uses such as opticians and travel agents etc.

² Figures relate to the floorspace contained within the Town Centre Audit Study Boundary of each centre at the most recent published survey date.




³ Based on the UK average, 100 being the average proportion of floorspace or number of units for certain categories of use in a UK town, not including markets.

Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the data and statements contained within this publication, Planning Services does not accept responsibility for any errors or inaccuracies which may have occurred therein.

BATLEY TOWN CENTRE PEDESTRIAN COUNT POINTS



Key to map

-  Position/direction of count
-  Main shopping area
-  Study boundary

1. Commercial Street
2. Cambridge Street
3. Upper Commercial Street/Branch Road
4. Bradford Road
5. St James Street
6. Alfred's Way (from car park)
7. Tesco 'Extra' entrance (in/out)
8. Footbridge (to/from Tesco)
- 9a/9b. The Mill (both entrances)

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